



A Small Switch

Direct Load Control = Savings on Your Summer Electric Bill



Do you own your home and have a central air conditioning unit? Does your electric utility offer a “direct load control” (DLC) program? If so, you may be able to save some money on your summer electric bill by signing up. Customers who participate receive bill credits while helping the utility make sure it has enough power to serve all its customers on very hot days.

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) strongly encourages consumers to sign up for these programs. Specifics vary among utilities but the programs generally work the following way:

- Your electric utility installs a small radio-controlled switch on your central air conditioning unit at no cost to you. (With some programs, switches can also be placed on electric water heaters.)
- The switch allows the utility to turn off or “cycle” numerous appliances for brief periods during peak demand times (particularly on days when temperatures climb above 90 degrees).
- Direct load control switches are generally used only a few times during the summer, usually on extremely hot days; it is very unlikely they would be used on weekends, holidays or at night.
- If your air conditioner is cycled, the cooling unit will be turned off for only a limited period of time resulting in little or no discomfort. The fan will continue to operate.
- By cycling a large enough number of units, the utility can better control the total amount of electricity flowing throughout its system. This helps utilities prevent blackouts and helps keep rates down by reducing the need to buy expensive power on the wholesale market and delaying the need to build new power plants.
- These programs are **voluntary**.
- If you take part and are served by an investor-owned utility, you’ll receive a bill credit regardless of whether your air conditioner is cycled or not.



The following Indiana utilities offer these programs:

Duke Energy Indiana (formerly Cinergy/PSI)

- Duke Energy's Power Manager is available to residential customers who live in areas where commercial paging is available.
- This program offers a one-time installation credit, followed by additional credits for each time the customer's air conditioner is cycled (with a specified minimum amount for the additional credits regardless of whether the unit is cycled). Amounts for additional credits vary by cycling time and current power costs.
- Power Manager offers two options: a lower-use option (installation credit of \$25 plus a \$5 minimum on additional annual credits) and a higher-use option (\$35 installation credit plus an \$8 minimum on additional annual credits). The minimum annual credits apply regardless of whether a customer's switch is used.
- Customers can ask to be exempt from cycling up to one day per month (from May through September) with at least 24 hours notice.
- For more information, call the utility toll-free at [1-877-392-4848](tel:1-877-392-4848). Duke Energy Indiana customers can also call [1-800-832-3169](tel:1-800-832-3169) to hear recorded information about specific cycling events.

Indianapolis Power & Light (IPL)

- IPL's CoolCents program offers a \$5 monthly bill credit from June through September, for residential customers with switches installed on central air conditioners.
- Customers can enroll in CoolCents by calling IPL toll-free at [1-800-305-0982](tel:1-800-305-0982).

Vectren Energy Delivery

- Vectren offers the Summer Cycler program to residential and commercial customers of its electric utility in southwestern Indiana.
- A \$5 monthly bill credit is offered for each central air conditioner on the program; a customer can receive an additional \$2 monthly credit by having a switch installed on an electric water heater. Bill credits are awarded from June through September.
- You can sign up or learn more by calling Vectren toll-free at [1-800-439-5504](tel:1-800-439-5504).



Rural Electric Membership Cooperatives (REMCs)

- 22 REMCs in northern and central Indiana offer these programs, as members of Wabash Valley Power Association.
- If you are a member of one of these cooperatives, contact your local utility to learn more.



Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor

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The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) is the state agency that represents utility consumer interests before regulatory and legal bodies. To learn more, visit www.IN.gov/OUCC.